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Statement on the Question of East Timor

at the Meeting of the

United Nations Special Committee on Decolonisation

August 14, 1989

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Honorable chairman and distinguished delegates,

First of all, I should like to thank you for giving me this opportunity to make a statement on behalf of the Japanese "Diet Forum on the East Timor Issue," which has been organized by 74 superpartisan parliamentarians of the Japanese Diet, including both Lower and Upper Houses.

All the members of the Japanese "Diet Forum on the East Timor Issue" are deeply concerned over the situation prevailing in East Timor and the suffering of the East Timorese people resulting from the suppression of fundamental freedoms and human rights, and denial of the right of self-determination.

Needless to say, the rights of self-determination and independence are the inalienable rights of all peoples embodied in the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the UN Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples contained in the General Assembly Resolution 1514(XV) of 14 Dec. 1960.

We appreciate the efforts of the Secretary-General of the UN, "to facilitate a comprehensive and internationally acceptable solution to the question of East Timor," as stated in his Progress Report on the Question of East Timor, 1988 and previous years. However, we wonder why the representatives of the East Timorese people are not included in his or his representative's consultation

and discussion with the parties concerned with this issue of East Timor.

Naturally, the destiny of East Timor must be the primary concern to the people of East Timor, and the people of East Timor have the inalienable right to self-determination and independence. We do not understand why the representatives of people of East Timor are excluded from the talks for solution of the issue.

If the inclusion of any representatives of East Timorese people continues to be denied in the UN dialogue with the parties concerned now consisting only of the governments of Portugal and Indonesia, we should like to petition the holding of referendum or plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations, so that the people of East Timor can exercise their right of self determination at the earliest possible date.

With a view to facilitating a speedy and peaceful solution of the question of East Timor, we intend to strengthen our solidarity with parliamentarians of other countries, e.g. through the PET. (Parliamentarians for East Timor), new world-wide organisation launched in June 1988. Mr. Satsuki Eda, representative of our Japanese "Diet Forum on the East Timor Issue" was one of the founding fathers of this new world-wide organisation of parliamentarians.

We also wish to strengthen our cooperation with humanitarian organisations working for a just solution of the East Timor issue

in as many countries as possible.

As for the so-far negative attitude of the Japanese Government and the ruling party towards the East Timor issue, I am sure it will gradually change, in view of the rising international concern over the issues of decolonisation and human rights as well as of the big change taking place in the Japanese domestic political scene, e.g. defeat of the ruling party and majority seats gained by the Opposition Parties in the recent election of the Upper House and similar phenomenon expected in the coming general election of the Lower House, the dissolution of which is now imminent.

As for the Japanese ODA which is not benefiting or which may be said rather disadvantageous to the East Timorese people, we would also endeavour to change for the better. As a matter of fact, 2 years ago I initiated and submitted to the Diet a bill to improve the Japanese ODA, so as to make it more humanitarian, paying due respect to human rights, and to promote the welfare of the grass-root level people. The bill also aims to increase and facilitate the parliamentary intervention with the ODA which is now entirely delegated to the discretion of Administration. The ruling party has been opposing to this bill, but with the increase of power of the Opposition, such a bill to improve the ODA of Japan will come to be enacted pretty soon.

Last but not least, I request the Com. would seriously consider our petition so that

~~hope~~ the right of self determination and independence of the East Timorese people ~~will~~ can soon be ~~exercised~~ materialized through the proposed holding of referendum under the auspices of the U.N.

In concluding my remarks, I should like to thank you again for giving me this opportunity to make ~~this~~ statement on behalf of the Japanese parliamentarians' group seeking a peaceful solution to the question of East Timor in the interests of the East Timorese people.